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# A Sheaf of Memories

*Address by*

R. F. WALKER

At a Meeting of the Old Settlers Association  
of Morgan County, Missouri



Published by the Association

F472  
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Author  
(Person)  
OCT 13 1913



# A SHEAF OF MEMORIES.

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Address delivered by R. F. Walker at Versailles, Missouri, August 4th, 1904, at the First Annual Meeting of the Old Settlers Association of Morgan County.

Nothing can be more pleasant and satisfying than a visit under such circumstances as these to the scenes of one's early life. I care not how varied the experience or changed the surroundings, or numerous the friends and associates of later life, or how engrossed the mind may have become with the cares and the duties which come to us all, or how lighted by sunshine or darkened by sorrow the years may have been, all of these vanish, for a time at least, as if by magic, in the presence of the scenes and the faces we knew in happy childhood, exuberant youth and ambitious young manhood.

The alchemist strove vainly through years of toil and study to distil an elixir which would render youth eternal; the adventurer, fired by the dream of the alchemist, visited foreign lands, explored new countries, sacrificed the lives of his followers and spent great treasure in search of some fabled spring the drinking of whose waters would confer a like boon. The dream of the alchemist and the quest of the adventurer have alike proved futile because they sought to reverse the immutable decree of nature.

While eternal youth may not be garnered from the fleeting current of our lives, we may and we do, under such circumstances as surround us today, travel back in fancy free to the days when our years were fewer, and our burdens were lighter, and when life in all of its more serious phases was an unsolved problem and the future was a land of hopes and dreams limited only by ambition and fancy.

"The Kingdom of God," said the great Exemplar, "is within you," and voicing this self same strain in another land, and with another faith, the famous tent maker, Omar, says:

"I sent my soul through the invisible  
Some letter of that after life to spell;  
And by and by my soul came back to me  
And answered: 'I myself am heaven and hell.' "

This then is the secret of the philosophy of life in all the ages. While the mind may not be all in all, it is the rich storehouse from which we draw at will, the blissful memories of the past, the pleasures of the present and the hopes of the future.

Today let us forget for a time that we have reached life's meridian and that we are descending toward the land of sunset. Today without the performance of any miracle or the working of any strange spell but inspired only by kindly words of welcome, hearty handshakes and familiar faces, let us roll back the years as a scroll. The comely matrons around us become young and beautiful girls; the middle aged men, fathers and grandfathers, now perhaps, become boys again;

and our loved ones, long since gone to sleep in the all encompassing arms of mother nature, come back at memory's call, from the eternal silence to crown the joy of our meeting. Under this influence may I not be excused for indulging somewhat in reminiscences even at the risk at times of becoming tedious because the scenes referred to and persons named will doubtless be unfamiliar to many of you and exist only in tradition.

Born at Florence in this county, where my father was first a farmer, and afterwards a country merchant, my earliest recollections cluster about that little village and the surrounding country. The people who lived there had emigrated from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina in the 30's and 40's and later a large number of emigrants came from Germany. As pioneers always are, these people, irrespective of the section from which they hailed, were poor, the only slaveholders I now recall being Overton Rice, Doctor Evans and possibly one or two others who resided in a richer section of the County across Flat Creek then and now called "Little Morgan." They were plain, practical, and, of necessity, industrious, because no dawdler or dreamer could by intermittent effort coax a living out of that not too generous soil, and while game was abundant and venison, turkey and fish often added to the bounty of the humble board, these did not suffice to afford a living without other labor. And permit me to say in this connection that no people have ever reached a high degree of civilization

who lived by the chase alone, and no purely nomadic or pastoral people have ever achieved permanent power and become the builders of empires. The people of that wonderful race from which we have derived the foundations of our religious faith, would, today, despite their grand idea of the oneness of Jehovah, have risen no higher in the intellectual and social scale than the Bedouin of the desert, to which they are near akin, had they not, in their wanderings, come in contact with the tillers of the soil and the trainers of the vine who had permanent abodes and pursued the civilizing arts of peace. Man, therefore, to reach his highest and best development must somewhere on the bounteous bosom of mother earth have a permanent abiding place he calls home. To establish this home the pioneer had to fell the forests, turn up the virgin soil to the life giving sun, and plant, cultivate and harvest the seed in its season. This our pioneers did; and to their laborious and persistent efforts to make homes for themselves and their children, not only in the section of which I speak, but throughout the entire country, we owe the stability of our government, the blessings of liberty, our magnificent system of free and liberal education and its flower and fruit which we call culture.

Our early settlers were men of meagre education; ability to read without hesitancy and write legibly were regarded as superior accomplishments; the only college men in the community were Uncle Tommie Wilkerson, a graduate of the University of Dublin, and Dr. E. M. Carr who, I believe, had

spent two or three years at some college or academy before commencing the study of medicine.

Books were rare and a family having a dozen volumes was regarded as the possessor of a library. The Bible was usually found in each household, and while the people were not irreligious, aside from the use of the sacred volume as a family register and a safe receptacle for title papers to the homestead, its presence was largely ornamental. This criticism, however, if it be a criticism, does not apply to our early settlers alone, for today in our more comfortable homes, with ampler education and a wider intellectual horizon, that wonderful compendium of history, prophecy and poetry, which the rationalist calls Hebrew literature, and the devout believer the Holy Bible, is as little read by the people generally as it was in that earlier time when it constituted the library of the family.

You will realize that books must have been very limited in number in Florence and vicinity in those days when I tell you I remember distinctly many of the names of the different volumes owned by our neighbors, except, in the case of Dr. E. M. Carr who possessed quite a library of general literature, to which I will refer later. William Baughman, father of your worthy president, and for many years a representative in the State legislature from this County, had a few volumes of Bancroft's History of the United States, a book called the Statesman, Benton's Thirty years View, a work on the U. S. Constitution, Jefferson and Jackson's lives, and

the Missouri Statutes. Uncle Tommie Wilkerson had somebody's (possibly Chapman's) translation of Homer's *Iliad*, *The Spectator*, Shakespeare, Goldsmith's *Poems* and Moore's *Melodies* set to music. An old shoemaker of the village named James Henry, an Englishman who pretended to great learning, had Rollins' history, Hume's *England*, a volume entitled "British Essayists" and another "The Anthology of British Poetry." I remember this last very well because I was a long time finding out what anthology meant; I once ventured, when this good old disciple of St. Crispin had allowed me to touch his literary treasures, to ask him the meaning of the word and he looked at me gravely and replied that "I wouldn't understand if he told me." I was, therefore, compelled to wait until Dr. Carr's unabridged dictionary enlightened me. Dr. Carr (without probably intending it or my realizing it until years afterwards), did me the greatest possible kindness—he permitted me to read his books. He had a hundred volumes or more of which I read with delight, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Arabian Knights*, *Don Quixote*, and several quaintly illustrated volumes of Dickens' novels. Others I probably read, but the memory of those mentioned clings to me like a mother's caress or a father's blessing; they did more than bring joy to my boyish heart and leave in their wake a train of delightful memories, they implanted within me a love of literature which has, through life, proved a joy in hours of ease, a solace in affliction and a comfort in every sort of trouble. Do you blame me then for this



merited though tardy tribute to the memory of Dr. E. M. Carr?

In the years ago of which I speak, men and women met with simple cheer and wholesome delight to attend church on Sunday or during the week to participate in a log-rolling, house-raising, quilting bee or corn husking which usually terminated in what we now call a country dance, which despite the disapproval of many good brethren of the Cloth, I will always regard as a harmless and healthy amusement.

One of my earliest recollections is that of "muster day" when the young men gathered on the schoolhouse yard and were drilled by Colonel William Baughman in the old manual of arms to the inspiring tunes of old Billy Cramer's fife accompanied by one of the Carver boys on the drum. How little did the actors in this mimic military display realize that in a few short years the fife would scream in earnest and the drum roll solemnly to call father against son and brother against brother in the most sanguinary conflict of modern times.

An occasional horse race on a level stretch of highway or a Saturday "shooting match" for beef or turkeys brought all the sports and crack shots of the neighborhood together. At these meetings there was little or no gambling in the more serious and gainful manner often found elsewhere in newly settled countries.

The drinking of red liquor was not regarded as disgraceful and in fact, it was so common a custom that I have heard

it said, though I do not vouch for the story, that even the ministers of our church and faith did not object to the presence of the familiar black bottle which always held the essence of corn, and, in times of great trial, as an additional safeguard against the menaces of sin, they are said to have followed good old Timothy's injunction and have "taken a little for the stomach's sake." While there were many who drank and some who now and then imbibed too freely there were few real drunkards. At each gathering, however, fist and skull fights were not infrequent, due more perhaps to the influence of liquor than any real differences of the participants. It was the rarest possible thing for a man, drunk or sober, to resort to a deadly weapon when engaged in a personal difficulty. Physical courage was the rule and not the exception and he was regarded as a coward who would resort either in attack or defense to other than nature's arms. In the twelve years of my boyhood at Florence, I recall but one instance of a deadly affray there and that was when Tom O'Neill was killed by Claib Young. True, there were occasional instances at public meetings of less serious affrays, as when Hen. Yandell struck Jerry Tomlinson with a stone on an election day as the latter was standing on a dry goods box before Dr. Sherman's store, singing a doggerel song, composed by George Evans and Nat Scoggins, the refrain of which was: "Yandell stole the cow bell."

Evans and Scoggins were the wags and rhymsters of the neighborhood. With coarse wit and a keen sense of the

ludicrous, they caught up current rumors, often having no foundation in fact, and wove them into familiar rhymes, to be sung or recited at "musters" shooting matches and on election days. I recall one entitled "Uncle Adam Slater's Husk-in' Bee" a rollicking song, long locally popular, which grilled, in a spirit of good humor, uncle Adam and his sons for not inviting Evans and Scoggins to the event.

Missouri enacted a general law for the support of a system of free schools as early as 1839, but it was not until twenty years thereafter that the public funds were sufficient for their support. The schools, therefore, with which persons of my age were familiar in childhood were private or subscription schools. That they did not, in any way, compare in efficiency with the ordinary district schools of to-day is without question. The early teachers I recall were, first, Tommie Bridges, a kindhearted old bachelor who was very lame; second Creth Chisholm, who permitted us to study aloud because, he said, "it would give us con-cen-tra-tion of thought, no matter how much we were annoyed by other things." Mick Gillum one of the boys at school, used to say that "Creth was Cracked." I didn't know then what he meant, if I had known I would have concurred in his conclusion. Our third teacher was a Miss Malvina Barrows, blessed be her memory; she was a prim, plain faced little woman of uncertain age from somewhere "away back East." She imparted instruction clearly and readily and was not afraid to say "she did not know" if asked a question she could not answer; she controlled strap-

ping young men, buxom young women and mischievous and undisciplined children without corporal punishment and by seemingly the gentlest and certainly the most effective means. Dave Baughman called her "Miss Rarey," which was the name of a famous horse tamer of that day who used only the gentlest methods to tame wild and vicious horses. Her methods were certainly a revelation to the parents as well as the children of the little village and when her last term of school closed and we gathered at Mr. Hook's to bid her good bye, before she started back to her New England home, there were weeping eyes and aching hearts that had never before known a pang at parting with a teacher. Looking back through the dim vista of the years I recall no other teacher who approached her in gentleness and firmness and whose capacity for imparting instruction was greater.

Forty-four years ago murmurs of discontent began to be heard all over this country. This feeling of unrest had been brought about by unwise congressional legislation and had been intensified by fanatics in one section of the country and extremists in the other. Neighbors who had theretofore been content to differ from each other with reason and moderation began to discuss their variant opinions on public questions with bitterness and invective. Public speakers at local gatherings harangued their hearers on state sovereignty, slavery and kindred questions, and one of the national political parties which for almost sixty years had been in control of the government, split into fragments through internal dissensions, and Mr.

Lincoln, who represented the united opposition, was, as a consequence, elected to the presidency. Civil war ensued and with its horrors many present are yet painfully familiar. It is not the time, nor the place, nor have I the inclination to attempt, even a dispassionate discussion, of any of the questions which precipitated this conflict. It is enough for us to remember that it desolated many homes, cost the country thousands of precious lives and millions of treasure. But the differences which brought it about have, thank God, been settled forever; sectionalism has been wiped out, first, by the mellow influence of time, and second, and most effectively, by the universal feeling of patriotism which welled up in every bosom during our recent war with Spain. A bond of peace sealed with the blood of heroes has been entered into by all of our people until no matter whether we live in Massachusetts or Missouri, in California or the Carolinas, we can exclaim with equal fervor: "One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, one nation evermore."

One incident which happened just before the beginning of the Civil War indelibly impressed itself on my memory and has since been the subject of much reflection. When our people realized that war was inevitable, although they could not comprehend its awfulness, a calm characterized their conduct akin to that which precedes an elemental storm. Discussions between neighbors became less frequent and bitter and while each set his heart as flint to do his duty as he saw it, there was none of that personal antagonism which had

formerly existed, nor that malignant hatred which after the conflict actually began, was brewn in that hell's cauldron called battle. The incident I have referred to was this: A short time before the Camp Jackson affair at St. Louis the citizens of Florence and vicinity met in mass meeting at the school house to "take sides," as they expressed it. At the suggestion of probably Mr. William Baughman, those present, if for the South, went to one side of the schoolhouse yard while those who were for the Union went to the other side. I was probably too young to have perceived and remembered the demeanor of these men and the frequency of the repetition of the story renders it difficult to separate personal impressions from hearsay; I either remember, therefore, or have been told, that there were no controversies, no idle jestings, but each man silently and solemnly took his place on the side of his convictions. This being done, these men, who in a few short months would be seeking each others' lives, went peacefully to their respective homes with possibly no more feeling towards their neighbors, who differed from them, than you feel to-day towards a political opponent. It is pleasant to reflect upon this incident because it strengthens the happy conclusion that the people, when left to their own deliberate judgment, will usually adjust their differences without strife. If, therefore, at that time, Governor Jackson and his advisers had been less intemperate in their utterances and Frank P. Blair and General Lyon less impetuous and revolutionary in their actions, Missouri, at least, might have escaped the horrors of

Civil War and at the same time have been saved to the Union.

My first recollections of Versailles were in 1862, when my father, who was then an officer in a newly organized Union regiment, came here to assume the duties of sheriff and collector to which office he had been appointed by Governor Gamble. The removal from Florence to Versailles was an important event in my life. Instead of the little hamlet of a score or more houses and a hundred or more inhabitants I found myself in what then seemed to be a big town of many hundreds of people. My first view of Versailles I have never forgotten. Florence, you know, is surrounded by woodland and although I had read about plains and prairies I had supposed that all towns and cities were similarly located to the village of my nativity. What was my wonder and surprise, therefore, when we drove up on the prairie near Henderson Marple's and I looked across the waving sea of wild grass, growing corn and ripening grain and saw in the distance, further away than I had ever seen objects before, the towering form of the old Court House surrounded by many houses. I asked Ben Davis, who was driving one of the teams, if Versailles was a city, and he said in his blunt, honest way that "it was as much of a city as he knew anything about."

History, whether personal, social or political, owes much of its value and interest to its fidelity to detail; the delineation of a local character here, or a minor incident there, serves to accentuate and emphasize the existence or the actions of some leading figure or the occurrence of some important event.



Realizing the truth of this statement I would, if it were possible, in these reminiscences, omit nothing which would be of interest to any of my hearers; but, to recount the numerous incidents and recall by kindly reference the many friends I have known and loved in the succeeding twenty years of my life, spent among you here at Versailles—years while filled with much joy, were oftentimes tempered by trial and saddened by sorrow—would require more time than even your indulgent patience would accord; I must, therefore, although the telling of it all, would afford me pleasure, generalize as much as possible.

For three years and more after coming to Versailles the Civil War was in progress and this section, while the scene of no great battles, was in the pathway of the advance and retreat of the contending armies. Regiments or brigades swept over the country, and while the masses of the soldiery were perhaps not personally dishonest, that strict military discipline which comes from long campaigns and years of conflict, was wanting; the wholesome restraints of the law, present in times of peace, had ceased to exist, and possessed of almost unlimited license the average soldier practically disregarded the rights of private property. Worse than this, that human jackal called the campfollower on the one side and the guerilla on the other, followed in the wake of an army's advance or retreat and destroyed or stole whatever the regular soldiery had left of the citizen's substance or store. Certainly those were times to try men's souls and not calculated to develop



the best traits of character in those subjected to their influences. Many of us present passed through this fiery ordeal, and while we are probably not better men or women for the experience, may we not be allowed, without egotism or self adulation, to express our heartfelt thanks that we are not worse. That this is so, is due, perhaps, more to the gentle influence of our mothers and the discipline of our fathers than to any distinctive merits of our own. Throughout all these troublous times many of our citizens did not actively participate in the war, not because they did not possess pronounced convictions or have the courage to assert them, but they felt and wisely too, that the highest duties of citizenship demanded that they should strive to preserve some sort of order in the midst of seeming chaos. To these men society owes a debt of lasting gratitude; it was to their prudent counsel that partisan rancor did not destroy every vestige of free government during the war; and, after it was over, they contributed more than all others to the re-establishment of law and order. The condition of affairs in Missouri was in no wise different from that of other states which suffered the ravages and disturbing influences of civil war. What was true of Missouri as a whole was true of Morgan County as a part of Missouri; here and elsewhere the laws were laxly enforced, public enterprise was paralyzed and individual effort impeded. So great was the difference between the purchasing price of the paper money issued by the National Government and that of gold, and so uncertain was the tenure of private property

that only the speculator and the adventurer would engage in business. This condition did not entirely cease with the close of the war, and had it not been for the dispassionate judgment and conservative conduct of the non-combatant class, it would have continued longer. It is something akin to a miracle, however, with what rapidity and completeness civil order reasserted itself after peace had been declared. True, there was much personal bitterness and some years of political proscription but as surely and certainly as turbid water will, when stilled, cast its dregs to the bottom and become limpid as the dew, so surely did the social and political atmosphere clear up under the quieting and clarifying influences of peace. Our people, whether victors or vanquished, went to work with brave hearts and willing hands to rebuild their desolated homes and reestablish themselves in their former vocations.

In classifying men as types of ability or character one naturally selects first, members of his own profession. I would be untrue to myself if I did not pay more than a passing tribute to the memory of Judge James P. Ross, one of the ablest lawyers who practiced in our courts. He was so simple and modest in his life and so gentle in his nature that only those who knew him longest and best truly appreciated his merit. He was thoroughly grounded in the principles of the law, had a wonderful faculty of analysis and could say more in fewer words on paper than any lawyer I have ever known. He was what we inaccurately but expressively call a "self educated man." In early life in Kentucky he had learned the

tailor's trade. I recall this incident which William C. Sevier used to relate of Judge Ross' retort courteous to a lawyer who, in an argument before a jury, had referred to the Judge as "a sort of a tailah from Kaintucky." The Judge in reply modestly said that "it was true he had been a tailor in early life and his patrons said he was a good tailor, but now that he was a lawyer he tried to be a good lawyer, but whether tailor or lawyer he had always striven to be a gentleman."

William C. Sevier was one of Judge Ross' students. He was a grandson of old Nolachucky Jack Sevier, the founder of Tennessee, and was a brilliant man. He drifted into the maelstrom of the Civil War in early manhood, and at its close died at New Orleans, before embarking for home, under such circumstances as Kit Marlowe is said to have died. Sevier had a keen sense of the ludicrous, a wonderful fund of anecdotes and a knack of rhyme which rendered him a charming central figure of any circle; that the circle was often convivial may have lessened his usefulness, but it did not detract from the grace of his manner and the charm of his conversation, and it shall not lessen the sweetness of his memory. Robert Burns, Edgar Allen Poe, S. S. Prentiss and other favored children of genius are said to have worshipped too often at the shrine of John Barleycorn; but, "as long as the heart has passions and as long as life has woes," the wonderful fruitage of their minds will not lose its flavor.

A few years after the war a colony of sturdy and industrious citizens came to Morgan County from Pennsylvania and

settled here and in the adjacent country. Among them was John H. Stover, a lawyer, who had been a colonel in a Pennsylvania regiment during the Civil War, and his partner, John D. Neilson. I have heard many of the famous orators of the country, but in force, fervor, simplicity of language and aptness of illustration Colonel Stover was the equal of any and the superior of many. If he had lived in the possession of physical health, to middle age and beyond, he would have been one of the leaders of his party in the Nation. A few weeks ago I sat high up in the galleries in one of our National Political Conventions and heard a debate between some of the greatest orators of the country, and, to my regret, I could only distinctly and clearly hear Daniels of Virginia, and Weaver of Iowa. I thought as I sat there if Colonel Stover were here and had a seat in this convention he would make every person in this vast audience hear him and in ten minutes command earnest attention.

James A. Spurlock, many of whose descendants are now worthy citizens of this community, had enjoyed early opportunities of academic and legal education. He was a man of much natural ability and possessed a most comprehensive knowledge of equity jurisprudence. Had he devoted his life wholly to that jealous mistress, the law, instead of intermittently pursuing other callings, he would have left a professional reputation, with the general public more in keeping with his just deserts, for his learning and ability were only truly known and appreciated by members of the bar.

Mr. Spurlock made some pretension to authorship. His monograph on "Attachments and Executions" is rather amusing than instructive in devoting more space to illustrating how these writs may be evaded than in stating the principles upon which they are based.

In 1872, he published a book, he had been several years preparing, having the all embracing title of "Heaven, Earth and the Millenium, by a Member of the Missouri Bar." It outlined its author's religious opinions and was altogether in a serious vein, but was the subject of much raillery and jesting among members of his profession. Sometime after Mr. Spurlock had published this book, B. R. Richardson, returning from a trip to St. Louis, brought the first account of the death of Horace Greeley—there were neither railroads nor telegraph lines then running to Versailles, and news traveled slowly. Mr. Spurlock asked Richardson the cause of Greeley's death; Richardson said it was not definitely known, but it was attributed to nervous shock, as Mr. Greeley was found dead in his chamber with an open book before him entitled "Heaven, Earth and the Millenium by a Member of the Missouri Bar."

I had the pleasure in the early years of my professional life to be associated in the practice with Anderson W. Anthony; "Old Blackhawk" he was familiarly called, first, I presume, because of his fancied or real resemblance to the old Indian chief, and afterwards because he frequently used that title as a *nom de plume* in articles written by him on public

questions for metropolitan papers. Writing for the papers was a diversion of which he was exceedingly fond. I have never known a man who derived more satisfaction from seeing his own thoughts in print than A. W. Anthony. His contributions to the press, not on public questions, were in the vein of "Flush Times in Alabama" and "Georgia Scenes," but were broader in their humor and more akin to the style of "Sut Luvengood." One of these, of a serio-comic and sermonizing nature, was an account of a drunken brawl which concluded a race meeting at Old Ionia where the horsemen of Morgan and adjoining counties had met to test the speed of their norses. After moralizing with seeming earnestness on the ill effects of such meetings he said, that the alcohol crazed fiends, not satisfied with beating each other, had taken one Rial Donalson, who was too much overcome with liquor to resist, and had burned off one of his legs almost to the knee in one of the fires where meat had been barbecued. After another paragraph deprecating the depths to which drunkenness will sink its victims, he said he had learned since writing the foregoing that Donalson's burnt leg was a wooden one. Not the least of Mr. Anthony's accomplishments was his skill in coaxing from a yellow backed fiddle such familiar melodies as "Billy in the Low Ground," "Turkey in the Straw" and "A Bunch of Keys." He delighted in the entertainment of young people and many pleasant evenings they spent at his hospitable home dancing the old familiar tunes to the music of his fiddle.

He was not what would be termed a learned lawyer, for instead of first thoroughly acquainting himself with the principles of elementary law, he had, after a desultory reading of some of the old horn books in early manhood, spent several years selling merchandise, and in other pursuits, after which, as B. R. Richardson once told him, in the progress of a trial, he had "jumped into the statutes at forty and assumed to know all of the law." However, this was not a just criticism. While Mr. Anthony may have lacked a knowledge of elementary principles, he was painstaking in the preparation of his cases, always possessed himself of a minute knowledge of the facts, was resourceful in a trial, and opposing counsel soon realized that he was a dangerous antagonist. My acquaintance with Mr. Anthony first impressed me with the fact that a knowledge of books alone will not make one a good lawyer any more than a good doctor or teacher. This fact received confirmation in the case of B. R. Richardson who in many respects was the antithesis of Mr. Anthony. The former had received an academic and professional education in one of the best colleges in Ontario; he had been reared in the atmosphere of the law; his father was for many years one of the leading Queen's Counsel of the Province, and the son was well equipped with a knowledge of legal principles; but, in the trial of a case, or even in the argument of a legal question, he was no match for a man of Anthony's native force and ability. B. R. Richardson, however, had one trait not regarded as common among Englishmen; he had the



keenest possible sense of humor, a power of repartee akin to that of Theodore Hook, Douglas Jerrold or Mark Lemon, and with it all such a spirit of good nature that his personal thrusts carried their own antidote with them.

Another lawyer who resided here a number of years and whose kinsman have been among my warmest friends since boyhood, was Colonel W. M. Woods. He was a man of much native force; he had been reared in an atmosphere of culture and gracious courtesy so prevalent among families from the Old Dominion where he was born, and possessed, when at his best, all of the *savoir faire* of a gentleman of the old school. He had a varied knowledge of the old English classics and possessed many of the elements of genuine oratory.

H. M. Jackson, who came here soon after the close of the Civil War, was a studious, practical and painstaking lawyer. He seemed to consider his professional duties as grave responsibilities and he was utterly free from all levity "dress parade" and "plays to the galleries" in the trial of his cases. He removed from here many years ago to Atchison, Kansas, where he built up a lucrative business and became a highly respected citizen.

Judge W. Y. Pemberton, for since he left here many years ago he has been Judge of the Supreme Court of Montana, was a man of many brilliant parts. He was more of an advocate than a lawyer, in the old days, and his oratory, whether before a jury or a mass meeting had a charm and a magnetism equaled by but few men I have known. Colonel



W. M. Woods used to say of him that "he was wonderfully expert in locating the tear gland, and that he could make a jury cry in a suit on a promissory note."

Captain John T. Campbell, a handsome and gallant young Federal officer from Pike County, Missouri, located in Versailles for the practice of his profession in the middle sixties. He was what we term an "all around lawyer." Possessed of a well trained and versatile mind, having a pleasing address and a power of adaptability to persons and conditions, he soon became not only personally popular but professionally successful. He removed to Santa Rosa, California, many years ago and is now one of the honored members of the profession in that state. During the administrations of President Cleveland he was consul to two different cities of the Orient where he reflected credit upon himself and his country.

Many other lawyers I knew here whom I might refer to with pleasure, but they are younger men, still engaged in the active work of the profession, and an analysis of their lives would, under such circumstances, be unfair to them and difficult for me.

Of the members of the medical profession, I have known, foremost among the number stands the name of Doctor John B. Thruston. An account of this section of the State which did not attempt to do credit to his many virtues would be sadly incomplete. His character like his physique was magnificent in its proportions. His very stride and mien were indicative of moral as well as physical strength. In the terri-

ble days of the Civil War he was to the distressed, whether in mind or body, as a great rock in a lonely land. My father was an ardent union man; Dr. Thruston an uncompromising southerner; yet I have known the latter to come to father's office in the old Court House many times in my boyhood to receive suggestions or offer counsel as to how they might, regardless of politics, protect a neighbor's property or save his life. In fifty years and more of the busy toilsome life of a country doctor, John B. Thruston did more practical charity than many modern benevolent societies. So implicit was the confidence of the people in him that he was the arbiter of many differences. While his ability and his skill as a physician were respected and relied upon it was the justness of his judgments and the righteousness of his conclusions that rendered him a shrine of refuge in time of trouble. To live the life he lived and leave the heritage of such a name as he left is more to be desired than to sit in high places or own vast possessions.

John J. McClellan and John C. McCoy were physicians who practiced in this section in my boyhood. Dr. McClellan died when I was a small boy. Dr. McCoy came here in 1865 or '66. He had resided here in an earlier day and after an absence of several years, covering the period of the Civil War, he returned, under circumstances which did not enable him to readily renew his old friendships and re-establish his professional standing. He had much native ability and a great store of varied information. I very well remember that he

was the first man I ever heard use the word "re-incarnation" and when I asked him what it meant he explained to me in a simple manner the outlines of the religious belief of that wonderful oriental people who had a formulated faith centuries before Moses received the law from the Divine hand amid the thunders of Sinai. Dr. McCoy was a quaint character; in his old age he was Probate Judge and postmaster and in the latter capacity was much annoyed by different children of the same families each day asking for their parents' mail. We had two families in this county in those days which always had a large number of children of school age. I hope their number has increased and that they continue a living refutation of President Roosevelt's doctrine that we are tending towards race suicide. In the evenings when school was dismissed the children of these two families would file into the post-office and one by one ask for mail. After the fourth or fifth inquiry Dr. McCoy would be white with rage. One day on going to the postoffice, I was amused to see this sign, printed in large letters hanging over the delivery window: "There is no mail for the Marriotts or the Silveys today," and ever afterwards when this condition existed this sign was evident. He also permitted himself to be annoyed by inquiries about the price of postage stamps and requests that they be placed on the letters. To avoid this he printed and posted in a conspicuous place in the office this sign:

"Stamps, three cents.

Stamps licked four cents.

Stamps licked and stuck five cents."

Dr. McCoy was a man of irascible temper and violent prejudices but he had his tender, his gentle and his noble side as well. In 1873 when this section was scourged by the pestilential breath of the cholera, no man, doctor or layman, did more than he to alleviate suffering and quiet the fears of our people until he himself was fatally stricken. When the end came I stood by his bedside with Dr. Williams, Sam Tillett, George Burns and Tom Monroe, and although enfeebled by age and in great physical agony he met death with a calmness and a fortitude worthy of a martyr of the true faith.

Dr. O. A. Williams, whose death has been so recent that indulgent nature has not yet covered his grave with the verdure of spring and the hearts of his loved ones are yet sore and bleeding at his loss, was a student of both McCoy and Thruston, and at one time a partner of the latter. Dr. Williams' life is an inseparable part of the history of this section. For sixty years and more he was a participant in all the activities of its development; he had witnessed its progress from primitive conditions. So linked was his life with ours that we mourn his loss as if he had been of our own blood. He never ceased to be a student, was devoted to his life work, and combined qualities not always found in the country doctor of being not only an excellent physician but a skillful surgeon as well. Personally he was a strange combination of physical force and feminine gentleness. In the ordinary walks of life and especially among men, strength and force were his predominant characteristics; but, with the gentler sex or at the bedside

of the suffering he had a touch of velvet and a tone of gentle soothing. Physicians of the regular school since the days of Hippocrates have not hesitated to adopt any means known to the mind of man, or to use any remedy in the pharmacopeia, whether vegetable or mineral, to cure sickness or alleviate suffering; and Dr. Williams and scores of others of this noble profession without arrogating to themselves the questionable honor of having founded a religious cult, or of being able to perform miracles, or to cure diseases without medicine, have, when they deemed it helpful, practiced hypnotism and mental healing and have even "held a thought" for their patients. I mention this in passing because much of Dr. Williams' gentleness of manner came from his realization that while certain drugs are potent remedies, their efficacy is often augmented by the impression made by the physician upon the mind of the patient.

The teachers who left their impress upon the lives of the boys and girls of Versailles, who are middle aged men and women today, were Garrett Minor, the Misses Dale and Thruston, Alex. M. Gibbs, Jas. F. Rhoades and wife and a Reverend Vanduser. Garrett Minor was a man of liberal education, much better adapted to a professorship in a college than the irksome duties of the elementary schools; the Misses Dale and Thruston were popular and pleasant teachers, beloved by all of their pupils, and the days spent under their tutelage is enshrined in our memories; Alex. M. Gibbs was a patient, painstaking teacher, in love with his work, conscientious in

its performance and the willing pupil could not do otherwise than derive lasting benefit from his instruction; Jas. F. Rhoades and his estimable wife had all the requisites of excellent instructors. They were well equipped for their work; they regulated the discipline of their pupils without harsh punishment and imparted instruction as though they were conferring a favor. Our last teacher, the Reverend Vanduser, was a minister of one of our popular religious denominations. He was a man of ample education and brusque manner with an idea of discipline savoring of that which prevailed in early days in other states when the whipping post and the pillory were much in fashion.

It would scarcely be just to omit the mention of the names of some of our early citizens in other walks of life who left their impress upon our civilization. Ezekiel J. Salmon, the father of Dr. Young Salmon, of Clinton, Missouri, and of former state treasurer, Major Harvey W. Salmon and Judge John M. Salmon of the same place, was one of our earliest and most influential citizens. He was a man of strong personal character, sound common sense and unflinching integrity. I never knew him personally but from tradition have always compared his character with that of Dr. J. B. Thruston.

Daniel Williams, the father of Dr. O. A. Williams, was a like type of citizen, and was one of a half dozen who "laid out" the town of Versailles in 1834. You will remember that this county had been carved out of Cooper County by an act of the legislature in 1832-'33 at the session of the Seventh

General Assembly, and that the first seat of justice was for a short time at Millville, or what you now call "James' Mill" south of Versailles; after this it was at Ionia which was located about six (6) miles north of Versailles, some half mile or more south of the Moreau Creek, on the farm owned, when I left Versailles in 1885, by Mrs. Wm. Ball. When, therefore, in 1834, it was determined to locate the county seat at Versailles, "Uncle Dan Williams," who was then a blacksmith, was, with others, commissioned by the county court to have a survey made of the proposed town that its boundaries might be recorded; Hugh Brown and Wm. Monroe were the surveyors and Dr. J. B. Thruston and John J. Hannon, chainmen. The distances were measured with a plow line, but this has never given rise to any serious questions as to the location of the streets or the extent of private property.

Tom Monroe, Sr., was one of the leading citizens of the county before the Civil War. He represented this district in the State Senate and was an active factor in every measure of importance affecting his constituents. During the Civil War he was the Colonel of a regiment of Confederates.

James Livingston, for many years a merchant at Versailles, was a native of County Tyrone, Ireland, of the better middle class, who had enjoyed the advantages of a literary and business education. He was a gentleman of genial nature and of too much ability to have limited his life work to the "pent up Utica" of a country town. He should have been a merchant prince instead of a country storekeeper.



William J. Tutt, prior to the Civil War, a large land and slave owner, was at one time sheriff and collector. He was a man of splendid presence, genial manner, upright life and influential in all matters of local concern.

Ross Burns, one of our early court clerks, was an efficient public officer and an excellent citizen. Although unwavering in his devotion to the Union during the Civil War, he was, nevertheless, active in assisting Dr. Thruston and others of an extremely opposite political faith, in protecting the lives and property of his fellow citizens, irrespective of their politics, at a time when human life was sometimes ruthlessly sacrificed and the rights of property were lightly regarded. The descendants of Ross Burns influenced, no doubt, by his example have ever been mindful of the fact that "a good name is better than great riches and good favor is above silver and gold."

Shores P. Hunter, who in the old days was an extensive farmer and a large slave owner, was a man of marked natural ability. Although possessed of but little of the education of the schools, he thought with continuity, reasoned clearly, and generally reached sound conclusions upon any subject to which he directed his mind. He was for almost a half a century a client and personal friend of Judge James P. Ross, and their final parting, at the time of Mr. Hunter's death, was one of the most affecting scenes I have ever witnessed.

William H. and Frank Bradbury were, during the 60's the principal and, at times, the only merchants in Versailles. The difficulties attending a mercantile pursuit in the then unsettled



condition of affairs, rendered their business precarious and ultimately unprofitable. William H., before his residence here, had been deputy warden of the Missouri Penitentiary, and thereafter he held the same position many years, his tenure ending only with his death, which occurred at Jefferson City, in 1896..... He was in many respects a remarkable man. He had marked native ability, great physical courage and strength, read men, straight or crooked, like open books, and probably, in his time, had a more accurate and comprehensive knowledge of the many phases of crime and the personality of criminals than any other man whose duty it was to deal with human derelicts. Due to his 35 years of strict and wholesome discipline, the Missouri Penitentiary grew internally to be one of the best and most wisely managed penal institutions in the country. Subsequent departures from his disciplinary methods have demonstrated by contrast his efficiency. Personally, he and his brother, Frank, were "fellows of infinite jest," good story tellers, and inimitable mimics. No incident having a ludicrous phase escaped their pleasant raillery in the old days at Versailles.

Other early county officers were Thomas Grayson Davis, W. W. Crook, Wm. T. Davis, Calvin Huff, W. J. Puckett, B. S. Walker, Wm. A. Mills, Geo. W. Painter, Frank Lutman, James V. Allee, James McNair, Syd Thruston, D. M. English, B. G. Bowlen and Jonathan Todd; they, as well as the later ones, were men of honesty and competency. Lack of time prevents my giving detailed accounts of their lives.

The county has, except during the period of the Civil War, been remarkably free from crime; in fifty years there has been only one lynching and one legal execution. Two of the most astute politicians in the county were Wade Parkes and Judge James V. Allee; while John Briscoe secured repeated re-elections to county offices by much hard work, efficient service and uniform courtesy, and W. H. Goddard long retained office by his generous nature and the confidence reposed in him by the people; Wade Parkes, who never sought or held an office, and James V. Allee, who never asked any other position than that of Probate Judge, could name candidates and nominate tickets without ever subjecting themselves to the accusation of being political bosses.

I regret that of the early ministry, who made so many sacrifices to establish an enduring faith among our people, I can only recall the names of Minor O'Neil, Isaiah Jameson, Abner Driscoll, W. M. Protsman, W. R. Litsinger, J. B. Box and J. M. Tennison. With their personal traits I am not sufficiently familiar to speak intelligently; and, "as touching the ministering to the saints it is superfluous for me to speak to you."

My time and your patience will not permit even reference by names to other early citizens of different sections of the county, who were of much the same type as those I have mentioned; they were honest and industrious, free in the main from cavil and cant and more given to living their convictions than discussing them.

From the wonderland called memory, from desultory jottings in diaries and journals kept irregularly for years, I have been able to recall many of the characters analyzed and incidents related. I have taken a special pride in the preparation of this paper, because, aside from the happiness which comes from these meetings, they stimulate a love of local history, a pride of family and a spirit of patriotism, all conducive to the best form of citizenship.

I am proud of the plainness of our ancestry, who, although poor, "unlettered, unambitious and abounding in children, yet, in the main, marked the track of their generations with a line lustrous with right living." "It is the plain people" says James Lane Allen, "who are the breeding grounds of high destinies." It is the plain people whose simple purity of life tends, from generation to generation, to raise the general level of civilization. Great wealth breeds degenerates, great poverty cramps and defiles. If the business and social life of our great cities where "wealth accumulates and men decay" was not replenished from year to year from the plain, sturdy manhood and pure womanhood of the country they would soon become as the cities of the plain, which the legends tell us were destroyed by fire from heaven.

In discussing the lives of those who, in this section, laid the foundations of the civilization we now enjoy, I have endeavored to be fair without being fulsome; to be candid without being cruel; to exalt manly strength and virtue; and, where it would not mar the facts, to cast the mantle of charity

over human defects and weaknesses. If I have said aught in seeming malice it was not so intended; but what I have said is said "that I may cut off occasion from them which desire glory; that wherein they glory they may be found even as we." But in thus speaking the truth plainly I would not be unmindful of the fact that with them as with us:

"Their lives are albums written through  
With good and ill, with false and true,  
And as the blessed angels turn  
The pages of their years,  
God grant they read the good with smiles,  
And blot the ill with tears."

R. F. WALKER.







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